

"TRAIL MIX TENDERS"

A Composition

The basis of the patent application for a food product known as Trail Mix Tenders is the process and composition developed to create this new product form.

Trail Mix Tenders are ground and formed, smokehouse dried, snack meat food products nutritionally enhanced by the inclusion of both dried fruits and crushed nuts or seeds. The inclusion of these nutritional adjuncts is achieved in the pre-smokehouse preparation of the meat. The selected meat is placed into a grinder/mixer with dry ingredients (seasonings and additives) and the fruit and nut/seed combination. It is then thoroughly mixed for even distribution of all ingredients. This mixture is left to "set" for approx 8 hours. It is then processed by extruding the blended materials through a flattened "horn" forming individual strips (Tenders) approx. 7" long X 1" wide weighing approx. 1 ounce. The strips are then placed into a heated smokehouse and smoked/cooked to an internal temperature of 175 degrees. After the smoking process the strips are air cooled and individually packaged. Packaging is of a vacuum type allowing for a shelf stable product with a minimum expiration period of six months with no refrigeration. The total process results in a snack meat "Tender" with a moisture to protein ratio of 1.9 to 1.0 producing a pleasantly dried yet tender "formed" snack meat. The addition of the fruit results in a release of natural fruit sugars which permeate the product with a slight sweetness unlike any traditional dried snack meats. The further inclusion of crushed nuts provides not only a visual impact by their presence but imbue an additional flavor characteristic with a slightly "crunchy" nut accent.

The current state of the art for snack meats of this type (dried, kippered, jerky) consists of numerous seasoning oriented flavor styles such as "Spicey" "Peppered" "Smokey" "Teriyaki" etc. It however fails to provide inclusions other than seasonings for variation. The Trail Mix Tenders process/composition not only fills the need for the ability to provide greater flavor variety it also addresses the importance of nutritional function. Dried fruit and nut inclusions provide substantial additional nutrient factors (vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, essential fatty acids, fiber phytochemicals) not available in any other snack meat.

With current and growing consumption of healthier more nutritious foods and the publics love of convenience/snack products the market potential for the Trail Mix Tender composition/process is tremendous. Snack meats alone generate in excess of 1.2 billion dollars in annual sales according to "Information Resources Inc." A nutritionally superior snack meat would only serve to generate greater interest in this segment.

INGREDIENT BREAKDOWN

Meat.....	74.6%	-	54.6%
Fruit.....	10.0%	-	20.0%
Nut/Seed.....	10.0%	-	20.0%
Salt.....			2.03%
Corn syrup solid.....			1.67%
Dextrose.....			(.81%)
Spices.....			(.73%)
Maple Sugar.....			(.06%)
Sugar.....			(.05%)
Sodium Erythorbate.....			(.04%)
Sodium Nitrite.....			(.012%)

TOTAL _____
100.00% (by weight)

DEVELOPMENT STATUS

The initial concept for the Trail Mix Tender composition/process was done on December 15, 1998. This was followed by months of research and development founding raw material sources and acceptable complimentary flavor combinations. Actual production of the first prototype was done on 10/20/99 at Silver Creek Specialty Meats, Oshkosh, WI. Silver Creek, a small family owned meat processing company with over 30 yrs. experience, provided technical assistance and production facilities. All parties involved in the development of the Trail Mix Tenders composition/process have signed a confidentiality agreement.

To date a market ready version of a Trail Mix Tender has not been offered for commercial sale. Packaging and display designs have been completed. Design modifications such as size and configuration variants are planned to meet existing industry standards.

No government grants or funds were employed in the development of the Trail Mix Tenders composition/process.

Until acceptance of the utility patent application there is currently no legal protection for the Trail Mix Tenders composition other than the non-disclosure confidentiality agreement signed by parties involved in the research and development of pre-production.

The date for initial sales of market ready variations of Trail Mix Tenders is planned for 10/15/2000

Invention Title: "Trail Mix Tenders" composition

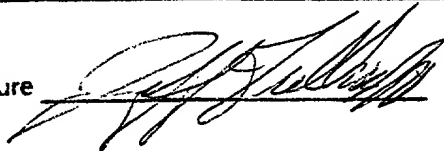
Date: December 15, 1998 (conception)

Inventor(s): Jeffrey M. Fulbright

Address: 667 Bowen St. Oshkosh, WI 54902

Mailing: P O Box 1483 Oshkosh, WI 54902

Inventor's Signature



Date

7-6-00

NOTARY SEAL

State of Wisconsin County of Winnebago on
this 6 day of July, 1999, before me,
Laura J. Jahnke Notary Public, personally

appeared Jeffrey M. Fulbright

Notary's Signature:



Notary Public in and for the State of Wisconsin

County of Winnebago

My commission expires 10-31-2001

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